

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

Media Office

Democratic Caucus

John Schorg, Director

Statehouse, Room 157

Indianapolis, Indiana 46204

1-800-382-9842 or 1-317-232-9621

Fax Number: 1-317-232-9792

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FRY RECEIVES PUBLIC POLICY AWARD FROM THE ARC OF INDIANA

INDIANAPOLIS – State Rep. Craig Fry (D-Mishawaka) has received recognition from The Arc of Indiana for his tireless efforts to improve the lives of people with developmental disabilities and their families.

Fry received the Public Policy Award from the organization during its 2005 appreciation dinner recently in Indianapolis. The Arc of Indiana, founded in 1956, is the state's leading advocacy organization for people with developmental disabilities.

In making the presentation, John Dickerson, executive director for The Arc of Indiana, noted that Fry has been a strong advocate for children and adults with developmental disabilities for many years. ***[Fry is shown at right with the Arc Public Policy Award.]***



His accomplishments include support for the bill that created the First Steps Early Intervention program and another measure that stopped the practice of holding families liable for the cost of their child's care in a Medicaid-funded institution. That move paved the way for the formation of Indiana's Medicaid waiver program, which has allowed thousands of children and adults to remain with their families or in their communities and avoid institutionalization, and enabled people to move out of institutions and return to their home communities.

Through the years, he has played a key role in many bills supported by The Arc of Indiana, including insurance coverage for pervasive developmental disorders, increased funding for the 317 Plan and Medicaid waivers, and regulatory reform of the service delivery system.

During the 2005 session of the Indiana General Assembly, Fry stepped up to defend Indiana laws that provide protections to people with developmental disabilities. He spoke against legislation designed to erode insurance coverage for people with disabilities, as well as changes in the biennial state budget that would cut funding for special education and reduce the numbers of people who could receive assistance through the CHOICE home health care program and the First Steps early intervention program.

"Rep. Fry is not only an outstanding representative of his constituents in the Fifth Indiana House District, but he is always a legislator who can be counted on to do the right thing for people with developmental disabilities and their families across Indiana," Dickerson said. "He is a lawmaker who thinks about people first, and does not hesitate to speak out to protect their programs, services and rights."

After receiving the award, Fry said, "As a legislator, I have always tried to do my best to speak out for those who do not have the power or influence in state government, but simply want the freedom to make their own decisions on how to live their own lives. I am appreciative of this honor from The Arc of Indiana, but I feel most of the recognition must go to the men, women and children served by this organization. They are the true heroes."